

Chapter 14

Enogastronomic Tourism in Times of Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

The chapter investigates the relevance of events in enogastronomic tourism during the pandemic. Over last years, typical food and beverage have increasingly grown their relevance within the tourism industry. The evolution of the concept of enogastronomic tourism and the economic consequences on the rural territories are illustrated. In addition, the different categories of enogastronomic tourists are examined, emphasizing the relevance of experience within the industry. In the second section, the role of the events and the experiences connected to them, in the wine industry, are analysed. Lastly, the chapter describes la Strada del Vino dei Campi Flegrei, isola d’Ischia e Vesuvio, a territory near the City of Naples, where well-known Italian wines are produced and many wine-centered events are arranged, strengthening the attractiveness of that rural area.

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, tourism is one of the most important economic industries. It generates a multiplier effect economically and can directly and indirectly benefit many sub-industries. Tourism has a leading role in the development of societies, and it represents a source of income for those offering services because people spend to satisfy their needs when they are visiting places during the holidays (Sormaz et al., 2016). Over the last decades, people’s needs require a higher and higher level of goods and services, which increases production, investment, and income in societies. Accordingly, wine and food tourism has become a distinct industry in tourism and not just a supporting factor when tourists are travelling (Everett, 2016). Although there is increasing relevance for local food consumption, scant attention has been given to exploring typical food and drink consumption in the context of hospitality and tourism (Kim et al., 2009). In fact, leisure travellers try to experience many food and drink events, both when food is considered to be a main part of the holiday and when it represents a supplementary element (Stone and

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Migacz, 2016). Evaluating the typical products entails a wider view than just commercializing them in order to generate rural development in an integrated and sustainable way (Slee, 1993).

The main aim of this chapter is to highlight the role of events in enogastronomic tourism as a means to strengthen the attractiveness of a destination during the pandemic era.

The chapter is articulated into three sections. The first section illustrates the origin of the modern concept of enogastronomic tourism. The socio-cultural changes in the last years of XX centuries stimulated new needs in the customers' minds. These needs are based on a slow life, a rediscovery of genuine food, and the appreciation for settings different from ordinary urban ones, such as a rural context. Emerging needs contribute to the definition of enogastronomic tourists who are attracted by typical cuisine but also by other interests connected to the local food and beverages, such as gazing at the landscape or learning about the production processes of a typical food. This chapter describes the role of the customers' experiences connected to enogastronomy and the possibilities offered by a rural context. Lastly, the socio-economic advantages of enogastronomic tourism for a territory are illustrated.

Section 2 illustrates the motivations behind the selection of an enogastronomic destination. It points out the different importance that each category of travel attributes to food and beverages during a trip and the increasingly relevant role of experience in enogastronomic tourism. Also, the section highlights the potential of wine tourism in the context of the experience economy. More specifically, the model 4E of Pine II and Gilmore (1998) is applied to wine tourism, illustrating the kinds of events which a traveller may participate in and the experiences associated with the events.

Section 3 illustrates Le Strade del Vino dei Campi Flegrei, Isola d'Ischia e Vesuvio which represents an effort to create synergies between the several wine producers and wine centred event organizers in order to coordinate and strengthen the wine industry of those areas that are rich in history, culture, and traditions and have volcanic soils which provide grapes and wines with delicate and unique flavours. The main scope of the Strade del Vino is wider than valuing the local wine. It intends to treasure typical craftsmanship, local food, archaeological sites, and the natural beauty of the territory.

ENOGASTRONOMIC TOURISM: THE EVOLUTION OF AN INDUSTRY

Enogastronomic tourism has its roots in old times. In the XIX century, some tour guides described in a very detailed way gastronomic specialities that tourists might find and the tastes and flavours in different Italian cities and towns. (Croce and Perri, 2018). Those guides contained so much information about the typical food in each region that they created some disorientation in a tourist's mind regarding the itinerary to follow. Anyway, over the last few years, a significant evolution of the enogastronomic tourism concept has been occurring, following the relevant social and economic change processes.

Many factors have contributed to creating the actual concept of enogastronomic tourism. First of all is the greater and the more widespread wealth of mankind in advanced and emerging economies. This has permitted people to satisfy new and more sophisticated needs. Experiencing cultural and local food permits one to achieve self-realization, the fifth stage of Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Guzel and Apaydin, 2016), making food tourism a driver in choosing destinations (Tikkanen, 2017). The improvement of communication and transportation has reduced the distance between countries and permitted people to more easily discover new destinations and new foods typical of the regions. Furthermore, the enogastronomic industry has become more attractive because of an increasing awareness of the importance of health and genuine foods and of the pleasure of spending time around a good dish (Guruge,

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